

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE #18**  
**Possession of Firearms and Firearm Ammunition by DCFS Wards**  
**October 1, 1999 - P.T. 99.18**

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**Section 18.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to provide the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and private agency staff with a standardized response and reporting procedure relating to DCFS wards who are suspected to be or are in the possession of a firearm or firearm ammunition.

**Section 18.2 Definitions**

“Caregiver” means the child’s parent(s), guardian, foster parents; administrators of group homes, institutions, and child welfare agencies; and relatives where the child resides, and who have primary responsibility for the care and supervision of the child.

“Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) ward” means any child for whom the court has given **custody** or **guardianship** to the Department.

“Firearm” means any device, by whatever name known, which is designed to expel a projectile or projectiles by the action of an explosion.

“Firearms ammunition” means any self-contained cartridge or shotgun shell, by whatever name known, which is designed to be used or adaptable to use in a firearm.

**Section 18.3 Safety Measures**

- a) Response by Department or Private Agency Staff

Department or private agency staff can observe and/or be notified at any point by a variety of individuals (caregivers, school officials, service providers, another child, etc.) that a DCFS ward may be in possession of a firearm or firearm ammunition. When a DCFS or private agency staff

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becomes aware that a ward could be, or is, in possession of a firearm or firearm ammunition, the staff shall immediately report the incident to the jurisdictional law enforcement agency and request its assistance.

b) Employee Participation in Search and Seizure

The DCFS or private agency staff shall **not** participate in the search and seizure of a firearm or firearm ammunition. The staff may, however, direct law enforcement personnel to the location of the firearm or firearm ammunition if the staff is aware of the location. Law enforcement officials are responsible for the handling of all search and seizure activities.

c) Reporting Procedures

When a Department or private agency staff takes action based on the knowledge that a ward could be or is in possession of a firearm or firearm ammunition, the staff shall complete the Unusual Incident Report process according to 89 Ill. Adm. Code 331, Unusual Incidents Involving Department Clients, Employees and Facilities.

**Section 18.4 Follow-up Services**

- a) The case manager and his or her supervisor are responsible for initiating additional services for the DCFS ward as a result of any incident involving a firearm or firearm ammunition.
- b) Within 24 hours after law enforcement is contacted, the DCFS or private agency case manager is responsible for completing the following:
  - 1) hold a clinical staffing to develop a safety plan and to determine ongoing services needed to meet the child's needs;
    - A) The DCFS Field Service Manager shall be responsible for calling the Clinical Manager and scheduling the staffing to be held within 24 hours.
    - B) Case manager and/or supervisor shall contact the DCFS Clinical Manager to schedule a staffing to develop a safety plan and determine ongoing services to meet the child's needs. The DCFS Clinical Manager shall be responsible for scheduling the staffing to be held within 24 hours. The private agency case manager and/or supervisor of a foster

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care or relative program shall also notify the Agency Performance Team Monitor of the staffing.

- 2) notify the parents of the situation and inform them of actions taken by the Department or private agency and law enforcement (when rights have not been terminated);
  - 3) follow up with the law enforcement involved in the situation;
  - 4) assure the Unusual Incident Report has been completed and reviewed by the supervisor; and
  - 5) update the Department Guardian's office.
- c) The case manager is responsible for continuing to monitor the safety plan and following-up on the outcome of the clinical staffing recommendations for services and placement of the DCFS ward.

If there are questions regarding Administrative Procedures #18, call the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983.

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